

# **PROMOTION RATE FOR OFFICERS IN AN ACQUISITION CORPS**

***Report to the Committee on Armed  
Services of the Senate and the  
Committee on Armed Services of the  
House of Representatives***

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**19990628 102**


**January 1999**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is submitted in response to section 849 of Public Law (Pub. L.) 105-85, "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998," that the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology (USD(A&T)) report to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives an assessment of the extent to which each military department is complying with the requirement set forth in section 1731(b) of title 10, United States Code. Section 1731(b) requires the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the quality of officers selected for an Acquisition Corps (AC) be such that the AC officers may be expected to achieve promotion parity with those not in the Acquisition Corps. The intent is to ensure that the Services select high quality officers to perform acquisition duties. This report assesses the success of the Department of Defense in meeting that requirement.

This is the second of the three reports to be provided under this section. The first report was prepared in January 1998 and provided comments and data for fiscal years 1994 through 1997. This report provides a discussion of the promotion rates of AC officers for the grades of Lieutenant Colonel/Commander (O-5) through Major General/Rear Admiral (O-8) in comparison to their non-acquisition counterparts for each military department for fiscal years 1998 and prior.

As we reported last year, the statutory promotion expectations for military acquisition professionals are not being realized equally well at all levels within all Services. I view the negative trends with concern and intend to address these issues in the coming year. We will continue to monitor the promotion rates in 1999 and will provide a third and final report in January of 2000.



J. S. Gansler  
Under Secretary of Defense (A&T)

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# **REPORT ON PROMOTION RATE FOR OFFICERS IN AN ACQUISITION CORPS**

## **I. BACKGROUND**

### **A. Statute**

Section 849 of Pub. L. 105-85, the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998," directs USD(A&T) to submit a report by January 31, 1999, "...containing the Under Secretary's assessment of the extent to which each military department is complying with the requirement set forth in section 1731(b) of title 10, United States Code."

Section 1731(b) states: "The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that the qualifications of commissioned officers selected for an Acquisition Corps (AC) are such that those officers are expected, as a group, to be promoted at a rate not less than the rate for all line (or the equivalent) officers of the same armed force (both in the zone and below the zone) in the same grade."

Section 1731(b) is part of Chapter 87 of title 10, "Defense Acquisition Workforce," which Congress enacted in 1990 as the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). As this title implies, Congress' aim in enacting DAWIA was to improve the quality of the Defense acquisition workforce for both military and civilians. DAWIA created the AC, which includes senior civilian and military acquisition workforce personnel.

Congress envisioned the AC as a highly qualified cadre of individuals who, by possessing the right education, experience and grade, would be recognized experts in the field of acquisition. Section 1722(d) of title 10 requires the selection of the "best qualified individual" for every acquisition position, and section 1731(b) supports that principle.

DAWIA included language that sought to ensure military acquisition officers are professionally qualified to perform acquisition management functions. To make an acquisition career path attractive, DAWIA sought to ensure equitable advancement opportunities for highly qualified officers who pursued acquisition careers.

The expectation of parity of promotion rates with line officers in other career fields signals Congress' intent that the Department of Defense (DoD) select only highly

qualified officers for the AC. It provides an inducement to highly qualified officers to choose a career in acquisition and an assurance such a choice does not prejudice their prospects for further advancement. Like last year, our interpretation of the statute measures promotion parity of AC line officers to that of non-AC line officers of the same armed force in the same grade.

#### **B. DoD Implementation**

In implementing DAWIA, DoD has established policies, organizations, and processes that address the education, training, and career development of the Defense acquisition workforce. Department of Defense Directive 5000.52 establishes the policy for the selection of members of the AC and the expectation of parity in officer promotions.

#### **C. Military Promotion Process**

The Secretary of Defense prescribes regulations for the selection board process. Each military department, in accordance with statute and the Secretary of Defense's guidance, establishes and implements processes for the promotion of officers. The Secretary of each military department convenes selection boards to recommend officers for promotion through the grade of O-8 (Major General/Rear Admiral). The then reviews the promotion board results and submits the report, with recommendations, to the Secretary of Defense for transmittal to the President.

The military departments establish eligibility dates for officers being considered for regular promotion (in the zone) and early promotion (below the zone). Most promotions occur in the zone. Relatively few promotions occur below the zone. Promotion below the zone indicates high potential for greater responsibility. Below the zone promotions do not exist for flag or general officer rank.

Promotion rates decline as officers move toward more senior ranks. Promotions to O-5 ranges from 55% to 70% of eligibles, while promotions to O-6 (Colonel/Captain) range from 40% to 45%. Only a relative handful (less than 5%) of O-6 officers are promoted to general or admiral. Promotions to this level depend on the quality of candidates and on a Service's need for individuals with specific qualifications.

To achieve the intent of section 1731(b), Services select candidates for the AC who are highly qualified and provide them with sufficient career advancement

opportunities. The selection-board process ensures recognition of meritorious performance and potential for greater responsibility among AC members, as well as that of their non-AC line or equivalent counterparts.

## **II. METRICS**

### **A. Data**

Comparative promotion rates by fiscal years (1992-1998), service, grade, and zone were provided by the military departments and are compiled in Appendix A. Service Acquisition Executives have also provided narrative assessments for 1998 as well as trends from previous years, and these are included in Appendices B (Army), C (Navy/Marine Corps), and D (Air Force).

### **B. Methodology**

The report compares the AC promotion rate to that of non-AC officers by rank and service for both within the zone and below the zone promotions. The charts in Appendix A use color-coding to present percentage data on military promotion rates. "Green" instances are those in which the AC promotion rate equals or exceeds that of non-AC officers. "Yellow" indicates instances where the AC rate was lower in a single year. A pattern over time of roughly an equal number of "green" and "yellow" cells would show that although parity is not explicitly being achieved, a Service is doing very well in maintaining quality AC officers. "Yellow" by itself is not a cause for concern; it is a pattern of lower rates that raises concern.

Cells highlighted "red" within the in-zone tables indicate the AC rate was lower in consecutive years and that the promotion of a single individual would not change this result. "Red" cells within the below-zone tables identify instances where a Service selected no AC officers for below the zone promotion. Thus, cells marked "red" for both in-zone and below-zone tables indicate that statutory promotion expectations are not being met.

While a "red" cell warrants attention, it is not in itself sufficient evidence of a problem relating to AC officer quality. Further review is necessary to determine a root cause, which may stem from any number of reasons, including the promotion process itself, the number of acquisition positions available in the grade being considered, or the characteristics of a particular year group. Accordingly, the quantitative data is

interpreted for this report in conjunction with the narrative assessments made by the Service Acquisition Executives responsible for managing their military department's acquisition workforce.

### **III. ASSESSMENT**

The Services are broadly achieving the expectation of parity in promotion rates. Differences exist, however, to the extent these objectives are being met.

The Army has generally achieved equal or higher rates of promotion of AC officers over the past five years. Overall in 1998, however, the Army selected AC officers at a lower rate than non-AC officers. Army promotion of AC officers to O-5 dipped compared to prior years, but promotions to O-6 improved. In light of the Army's past record, we believe the Army's O-5 promotion rate for 1998 is an anomaly, and is not a cause for concern at this time. Promotion to O-7 is lower again for AC officers this year, although promotion to O-8 remains higher. Below the zone promotions to O-5 and O-6 are lower for AC officers, even though the AC officer rates have generally increased the past several years.

The Navy has an excellent record of promoting acquisition officers to O-5 and O-6. O-5 promotions, however, were significantly lower in 1998, but, like the Army, we believe this is a one year anomaly and not a cause of concern at this time. Navy flag-level promotions, especially to O-8, remain significantly lower, continuing a previous trend. The Navy Acquisition Executive addressed this trend in Appendix C. I am concerned about these negative trends and will address these issues in the coming year. Below the zone results remain lower for AC officers. The Marine Corps achieved or exceeded parity in promotion rates at all levels in 1998, despite the very small population of AC officers at each rank.

The Air Force has not met parity for O-8s for the past three years, while O-7 AC promotions are meeting parity. Air Force promotions to O-5 meet parity for AC officers, while promotions to O-6 have dropped below parity for the past two years. Below the zone selection rates for O-5 meet parity. Below the zone selection rates for O-6 are markedly below the rates for non-AC officers the past two years.

The graph in Appendix A displays the trends over time in primary zone promotion rates between AC and non-AC officers when all Services are combined (as a

percentage of the non-AC promotion rate.) In general, the differences in promotion rates between AC and non-AC officers continue to converge over time to parity.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

This is the second of three reports assessing the military departments' compliance with the requirements in section 1731(b) of title 10, United States Code. The statutory promotion expectations for military acquisition professionals are not being realized equally well at all levels within all Services. I view the negative trends with concern and intend to address these issues in the coming year. We will continue to monitor the promotion rates in 1999 and will provide a third and final report in January of 2000.



## **APPENDIX A**

### **OFFICER PROMOTION DATA**

# OFFICER PROMOTION DATA

## IN ZONE ACQUISITION CORPS PROMOTION RATE COMPARISONS

(percent promoted out of the number considered)

### ARMY

to:	1992	1993	1994*	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>MGEN AC</b>	11.1 Y	33.3 G	28.6 Y	16.7	57.1 G	50.0 G	57.1 G
<b>Non-AC</b>	32.2 <sup>-2</sup>	33.3 <sup>0</sup>	35.4 <sup>-1</sup>	36.3 <sup>-2</sup>	45.2 <sup>0</sup>	44.8 <sup>0</sup>	46.2 <sup>0</sup>
<b>BGEN AC</b>	1.8 Y	1.4	1.2	1.9 Y	3.1 G	1.9 Y	1.4
<b>Non-AC</b>	1.9 <sup>-1</sup>	2.3 <sup>-2</sup>	2.6 <sup>-3</sup>	2.5 <sup>-1</sup>	2.4 <sup>1</sup>	2.6 <sup>-2</sup>	2.3 <sup>-2</sup>
<b>COL AC</b>	55.7	51.5 G	50.7 G	47.2 G	31.7 Y	36.7	50.0 G
<b>Non-AC</b>	43.6 <sup>7</sup>	43.3 <sup>5</sup>	42.0 <sup>6</sup>	44.2 <sup>2</sup>	42.2 <sup>-7</sup>	39.2 <sup>-2</sup>	41.6 <sup>5</sup>
<b>LCOL AC</b>	76.6	77.0 G	79.7 G	72.0 G	58.5 Y	62.6 G	56.7 Y
<b>Non-AC</b>	62.0 <sup>18</sup>	61.8 <sup>25</sup>	63.8 <sup>22</sup>	59.5 <sup>23</sup>	60.2 <sup>-4</sup>	59.6 <sup>5</sup>	69.2 <sup>-19</sup>

### NAVY

to:	1992	1993	1994*	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>RADM AC</b>	40.0 Y	36.4	30.8	40.0	38.5	44.4 Y	36.4
<b>Non-AC</b>	48.7 <sup>-1</sup>	46.3 <sup>-2</sup>	44.7 <sup>-2</sup>	48.5 <sup>-2</sup>	48.6 <sup>-2</sup>	45.7 <sup>-1</sup>	55.6 <sup>-3</sup>
<b>RADM(L) AC</b>	2.7 G	1.9 Y	2.1 Y	2.5 G	2.0 Y	2.8 Y	2.3 Y
<b>Non-AC</b>	2.2 <sup>1</sup>	2.3 <sup>-2</sup>	2.2 <sup>-1</sup>	2.3 <sup>0</sup>	2.8 <sup>-3</sup>	2.9 <sup>-1</sup>	2.5 <sup>-1</sup>
<b>CAPT AC</b>	54.1 G	50.0 G	48.2 G	56.1 G	46.7 Y	56.2 G	53.9 G
<b>Non-AC</b>	51.0 <sup>3</sup>	47.3 <sup>2</sup>	45.3 <sup>3</sup>	47.1 <sup>11</sup>	47.6 <sup>-2</sup>	42.1 <sup>22</sup>	40.2 <sup>22</sup>
<b>CDR AC</b>			75.0 G	73.4 G	72.2 G	72.6 G	52.9 Y
<b>Non-AC</b>	68.2	62.7	65.1 <sup>7</sup>	69.4 <sup>4</sup>	61.3 <sup>9</sup>	63.8 <sup>8</sup>	68.9 <sup>-17</sup>

### USMC

to:	1992	1993	1994*	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>MGEN AC</b>			100.0 G			66.7 G	50.0 G
<b>Non-AC</b>		55.0	52.9 <sup>0</sup>	50.0	30.0	47.4 <sup>0</sup>	39.1 <sup>0</sup>
<b>BGEN AC</b>			0.0 Y	2.8 Y	2.4 G	0.0 Y	2.4 G
<b>Non-AC</b>		3.7	3.9 <sup>-1</sup>	3.0 <sup>-1</sup>	1.5 <sup>0</sup>	3.0 <sup>-2</sup>	2.4 <sup>0</sup>
<b>COL AC</b>		71.4 G	20.0 Y	21.4	43.8 Y	35.7 Y	54.5 G
<b>Non-AC</b>		40.8 <sup>2</sup>	41.6 <sup>-2</sup>	45.0 <sup>-4</sup>	45.0 <sup>-1</sup>	42.9 <sup>-1</sup>	41.8 <sup>2</sup>
<b>AC</b>		50.0 Y	66.7 G	47.4 Y	59.1	73.9 G	70.0 G
<b>Non-AC</b>		54.3 <sup>-1</sup>	56.6 <sup>0</sup>	57.6 <sup>-2</sup>	65.8 <sup>-2</sup>	67.9 <sup>1</sup>	66.7 <sup>0</sup>

### USAF

to:	1992	1993	1994*	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>MGEN AC</b>		27.3 G	26.7 G	26.7 G	25.0 Y	25.0 Y	30.8 Y
<b>Non-AC</b>		25.7 <sup>0</sup>	22.5 <sup>0</sup>	24.1 <sup>0</sup>	29.3 <sup>-1</sup>	25.7 <sup>-1</sup>	35.3 <sup>-1</sup>
<b>BGEN AC</b>				1.5 Y	3.9 G	2.2 G	2.5 G
<b>Non-AC</b>				2.3 <sup>-2</sup>	2.6 <sup>3</sup>	2.2 <sup>0</sup>	2.4 <sup>0</sup>
<b>COL AC</b>	1.3 Y		46.5 G		41.9 G	32.1 Y	41.2
<b>Non-AC</b>	1.4 <sup>-1</sup>		41.4 <sup>10</sup>		41.9 <sup>0</sup>	43.8 <sup>-17</sup>	41.8 <sup>-2</sup>
<b>LCOL AC</b>			74.3 G	76.5 G	69.4 G	68.9 G	65.9 G
<b>Non-AC</b>			62.5 <sup>8</sup>	62.2 <sup>21</sup>	62.5 <sup>10</sup>	62.6 <sup>7</sup>	62.4 <sup>2</sup>

Notes: Numbers below the colored squares reflect AC numerical shortfalls/surplus (-/+).

\* Selection criteria for the AC took effect in FY 1994.

## BELOW ZONE ACQUISITION CORPS PROMOTION RATE COMPARISONS

(percent promoted out of the number considered)

### ARMY

to:	1992	1993	1994*	1995	1996	1997	1998
COL AC	0.7 Y	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4 Y	0.0	0.6 Y
Non-AC	2.3 <sup>-3</sup>	2.2 <sup>-5</sup>	2.3 <sup>-5</sup>	1.6 <sup>-4</sup>	1.3 <sup>-2</sup>	1.1 <sup>-2</sup>	1.5 <sup>-2</sup>
LCOL AC	1.9 Y	0.6 Y	0.5 Y	0.0	0.5 Y	3.2 Y	2.0 Y
Non-AC	4.8 <sup>-5</sup>	5.7 <sup>-8</sup>	5.3 <sup>-10</sup>	6.4 <sup>-13</sup>	5.0 <sup>-9</sup>	6.3 <sup>-5</sup>	3.9 <sup>-1</sup>

### NAVY

to:	1992	1993	1994*	1995	1996	1997	1998
CAPT AC		0.7 Y	1.9 Y	0.6 Y	1.7 G	1.3 Y	1.6 Y
Non-AC		1.7 <sup>-2</sup>	2.2 <sup>-1</sup>	0.9 <sup>-1</sup>	0.6 <sup>3</sup>	2.7 <sup>-5</sup>	2.3 <sup>-2</sup>
CDR AC			2.2 G	0.7 Y	2.5 Y	1.8 Y	0.6 Y
Non-AC		0.2	2.0 <sup>0</sup>	1.0 <sup>-1</sup>	7.3 <sup>-8</sup>	1.9 <sup>-1</sup>	0.7 <sup>-1</sup>

### USAF

to:	1992	1993	1994*	1995	1996	1997	1998
COL AC			3.0 Y		4.3 G	1.4 Y	1.2 Y
Non-AC			3.7 <sup>-3</sup>		3.5 <sup>3</sup>	2.9 <sup>-7</sup>	3.3 <sup>-9</sup>
LCOL AC			4.4 G	6.6 G	4.5 G	3.3 G	3.6 G
Non-AC			1.8 <sup>2</sup>	3.0 <sup>4</sup>	2.7 <sup>2</sup>	2.3 <sup>1</sup>	2.3 <sup>1</sup>

Notes: Numbers below the colored squares reflect AC numerical shortfalls/surplus (-/+).

USMC table not shown due to rarity of below zone promotions in the USMC.

\* Selection criteria for the AC took effect in FY 1994.

### COLOR CODING

#### Both charts:

- Green   AC promotion rate equalled or exceeded Line promotion and therefore met statutory expectation.
- Yellow   AC promotion rate lower than Line promotion rate.

#### In zone chart:

- Red   AC promotion rate below Line rate for second consecutive year, and one more AC promotion would not have made up the difference.

#### Below zone chart:

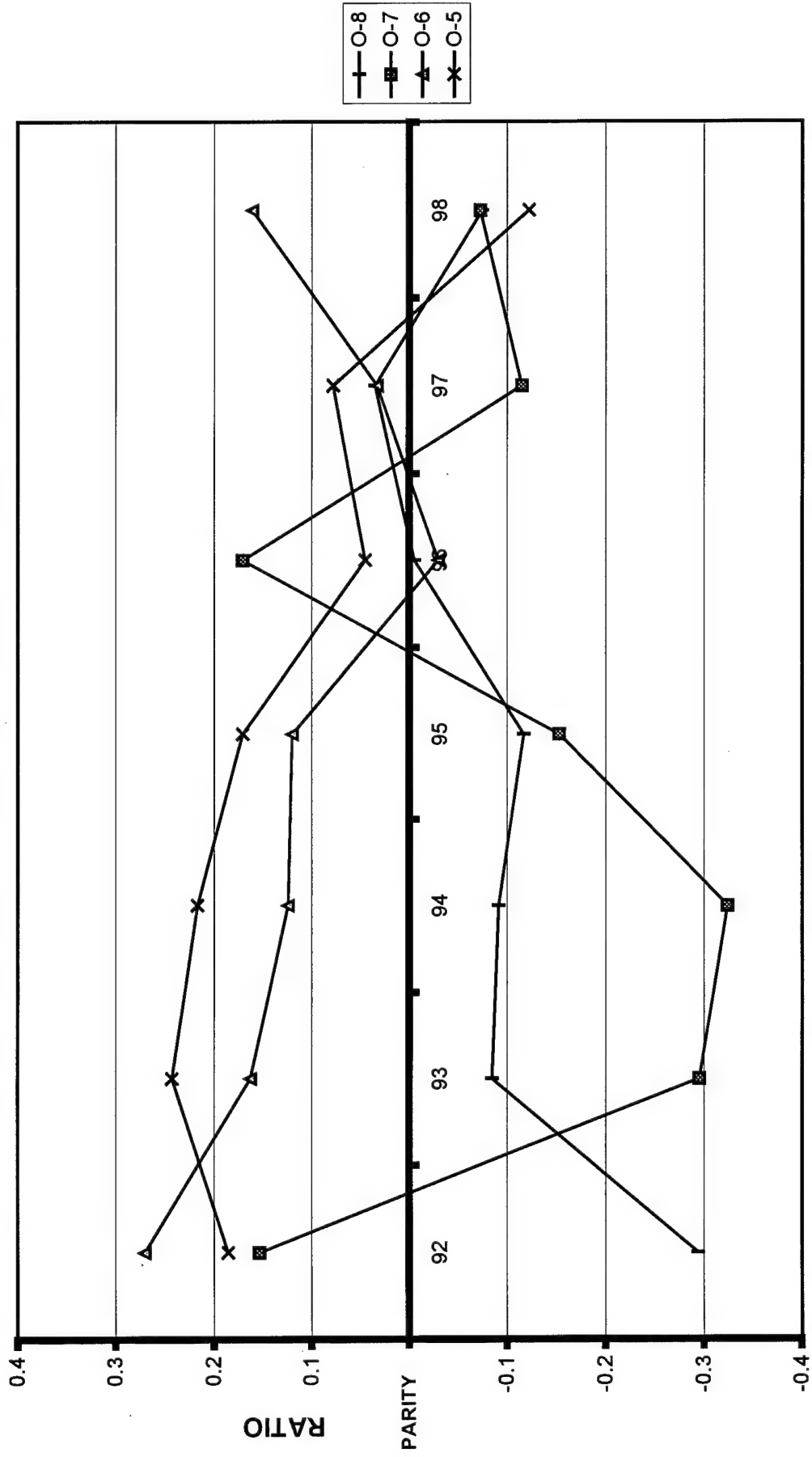
- Red   No AC officers promoted below the zone.

### ABBREVIATIONS

MGEN	Major General - Two stars - Grade of O-8
BGEN	Brigadier General - One star - Grade of O-7
COL	Colonel - Grade of O-6
LCOL	Lieutenant Colonel - Grade of O-5
RADM	Rear Admiral - Two stars - Grade of O-8
RADM(L)	Rear Admiral (Lower Half) - One star - Grade of O-7
CAPT	Captain (Navy) - Grade of O-6
CDR	Commander - Grade of O-5
AC	Acquisition Corps officers
Line	Line (or equivalent) counterparts to AC officers

# **RATIO OF PROMOTION DIFFERENCE TO NON-AC PROMOTION RATE**

(AC PROMOTION RATE - NON-AC PROMOTION RATE)/NON-AC PROMOTION RATE



## **APPENDIX B**

### **ARMY ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE ASSESSMENT**

# **ASSESSMENT**

## **ARMY ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE**

Hon. Paul J. Hoeper  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research, Development, and Acquisition

### **PART A. Description:**

The military component of the Army Acquisition Corps accesses most of its officers in the grade of CPT from across the basic branches of the Army. Army Acquisition Corps candidates are qualified in their basic branch. Branch qualification includes a successful company command. Accession takes place between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> year of service, with the majority of officers accessed during the 8<sup>th</sup> year of service. Once accessed, Army Acquisition officers serve in only acquisition positions and do not return to their basic branch. Acquisition officers compete for promotion on the merits of their performance as compared against the entire eligible population of officers, regardless of branch, with the exception of the specialty branches of medical, chaplain, and legal.

### **PART B. Comments:**

Overall, Acquisition officers (Grades 05-08) were selected at a rate lower than non-acquisition officers for 1998. This year was the second year of lower selection rates for BG.

#### **In the Zone:**

Promotion rate to LTC dipped in 1998, although a five-year trend still shows an overall higher promotion rate than non-acquisition officers. There is no indication at this time that this year's lower LTC selection rate will mark a change in that trend.

Promotion rate to COL recovered in 1998 following two years of consecutively lower selection rates. Based on a five-year trend, the rates do not show cause for concern.

Promotion rate to BG, both in 1998 and over the last five years, are lower than non-acquisition officers.

Promotion rate to MG for 1998 and the two previous years are higher than non-acquisition officers.

#### **Below the Zone**

Officers selected from below the zone must be clearly superior to those officers considered in and above the zone. In 1998, acquisition officers have lower selection rates to both LTC and COL than non-acquisition officers. This continues a six-year trend of lower selection rates for both grades.

### **PART C. Assessment:**

Although in 1998 Army Acquisition officers have a lower selection rate than non-acquisition officers, there are no indications that this is indicative of either a systemic bias against or of a deterioration of the quality of acquisition officers. Considering all grades over the last five years, acquisition officers continue to be selected for

promotion at rates that equal or exceed those of non-acquisition officers. The exception is the promotion rate to BG. The 1998 results merit attention, but not concern. I reasonably expect Army acquisition officers to have promotion rates in FY 1999 that will meet or exceed the selection rates for non-acquisition officers.

It is noteworthy that the Army is engaged in a major restructuring of the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS XXI) at the direction of the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), and under the management of the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER). My staff is working to insure that the letter and intent of the legislation establishing the DOD Acquisition mandates are included in the planning and implementation of this restructuring. I am reasonably confident at this time that these OPMS XXI changes will have no negative impact on the promotion opportunity of acquisition officers. As full implementation of OPMS XXI will not occur until 2000 or beyond, I do not anticipate any significant changes in the 1999 promotion rates that would indicate any trend change. However, the OPMS XXI implementation may establish a new "baseline" for 2000 and beyond, making today's promotion trends no longer valid. My staff will closely monitor this evolving process.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **NAVY ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE ASSESSMENT**



# **ASSESSMENT NAVY ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE**

H. Lee Buchanan

Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition

## **Part A. Selection Process:**

Acquisition Corps Selection Process: The Department of the Navy selects officers into the Acquisition Corps annually through a formal board process. To support our goal of promotion parity, we have added a promotability screen to the basic Acquisition Corps requirements set in legislation.

Officer Promotion Process: Each year, the Department of the Navy convenes selection boards through the grade of O-8 (Rear Admiral) to recommend officers for promotion. Precepts for promotion boards at the O-5 (Commander/Lieutenant Colonel) level and above include appropriate language expressing the statutory expectation for promotion parity. The precepts also include language to ensure that the process fairly credit an officer's acquisition experience. The Secretary of the Navy reviews the promotion board results and submits his report with recommendations to the Secretary of Defense for transmittal to the President.

## **Part B. Comments:**

Selections boards and resulting promotion statistics are managed separately for the Marine Corps and the Navy. The following provides a separate analysis for each:

Marine Corps: I am pleased to report that the Marine Corps exceeded promotion parity at the O-8 (Major General), O-6 (Colonel), and O-5 (Lieutenant Colonel) levels and met promotion parity at the O-7 (Brigadier General) level.

Navy: As in past years, the Navy did not meet promotion parity at the O-7 (Rear Admiral-Lower Half) and O-8 (Rear Admiral) levels. At the O-8 level, in particular, there was a significant discrepancy between selection rates – 36.4 percent of eligible acquisition officers were selected versus 55.6 percent of eligible non-acquisition officers, a disparity of 19.2 percent. Additionally, for the first time this year, Navy fell significantly below promotion parity at the O-5 (Commander) level. At the O-5 level, 52.9 percent of eligible acquisition officers were selected versus 68.9 percent of eligible non-acquisition officers, a disparity of 16 percent. This disparity, however, may be an aberration since we have substantially exceeded promotion parity at the O-5 level in previous years.

## **Part C. Assessment:**

The Navy is doing a superb job in selecting and maintaining quality officers in our Acquisition Corps. We are not doing as well, however, in promoting these officers to the flag level. During the past several years, the ASN(RDA) has implemented a number of initiatives aimed at improving Navy's statistics, e.g., promotability screen for selection into the Acquisition Corps and inclusion of promotion parity language in selection board precepts. This year, additional flag billets were designated as acquisition billets. Officers filling these billets are qualified members of the Acquisition Corps. We expect these efforts to result in improved promotion parity at the flag level in future years.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **AIR FORCE ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE ASSESSMENT**

# **ASSESSMENT**

## **AIR FORCE ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE**

Darleen A. Druyun  
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Acquisition)

### **Part A. Description:**

Air Force applies the following mandatory qualifications in selecting officers for the Acquisition Corps:

- Must be a Lieutenant Colonel or higher grade or a Major occupying a critical acquisition position
- Must have a Baccalaureate degree
- Must have 24 semester credit hours of study or the equivalent from among the following disciplines: accounting, business finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, and organization and management; or at least 24 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) in the person's career field and 12 semester credit hours from among the disciplines listed above.
- Must have at least 4 years of experience in an acquisition (DAWIA coded) position
- Must have all Officer Performance Report evaluation blocks on the front side marked satisfactory (meeting standards).

### **Part B. Comments:**

The Air Force did not meet promotion parity at the O-6 (Colonel) level. Corps promotion rates to O-6 significantly increased compared to a sharp drop in 1997, but fell short of the non-acquisition line officer threshold by two officers.

### **Part C. Assessment:**

The Air Force continues to be generally successful in selecting promotable Acquisition Corps officers, as shown by the promotion rates in Appendix A. Acquisition Corps promotion rates to O-5, O-7, and O-8 have been consistently green, with few yellow categories. However, promotion rates to O-6, while markedly improved over 1997, did not meet parity for a second year. The Air Force Personnel Center analyzed the FY97 board's results and concluded the FY97 promotion rate to be an anomaly. This year's O-6 board results confirm this finding, but O-6 promotion performance still has not fully recovered parity. The initiatives described in Part D. will address issues highlighted by O-6 promotion performance.

Officers in the Air Force Acquisition Corps remain competitive with their peers, and their promotion rates reflect high quality individuals. To maintain this momentum, the Air Force constantly focuses attention on key quality factors. We support each officer's efforts to obtain training and apply it to their jobs, since quality starts with a current and flexible set of skills. Further, we emphasize the importance of professional military education to sharpen our officers' leadership qualities. Finally, Air Force acquisition leaders at the highest levels take an active role in setting, implementing, and reviewing career management policies for the Acquisition Corps.

**Part D. Initiatives:**

The Air Force is actively pursuing opportunities for maintaining and improving the quality of its Acquisition Corps members. An initiative is underway to enhance acquisition career management process by establishing an improved Air Force corporate structure. This structure provides a comprehensive forum for addressing issues and assessing policy impacts. Additionally, mandatory qualifications for Acquisition Corps membership are being reviewed to ensure high quality officers continue to be admitted into the Acquisition Corps. Proven performance, coupled with new initiatives, indicate the Air Force will continue to meet Acquisition Corps promotion expectations in the future.